



## Apple Blossoms

Inspection report for early years provision

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| <b>Unique Reference Number</b> | EY340583                             |
| <b>Inspection date</b>         | 19 February 2007                     |
| <b>Inspector</b>               | Amanda Joy                           |
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| <b>Type of inspection</b>      | Integrated                           |
| <b>Type of care</b>            | Full day care                        |

## ABOUT THIS INSPECTION

The purpose of this inspection is to assure government, parents and the public of the quality of childcare and, if applicable, of nursery education. The inspection was carried out under Part XA Children Act 1989 as introduced by the Care Standards Act 2000 and, where nursery education is provided, under Schedule 26 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998.

This report details the main strengths and any areas for improvement identified during the inspection. The judgements included in the report are made in relation to the outcomes for children set out in the Children Act 2004; the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding; and, where nursery education is provided, the *Curriculum guidance for the foundation stage*.

The report includes information on any complaints about the childcare provision which Ofsted has received since the last inspection or registration or 1 April 2004 whichever is the later.

### The key inspection judgements and what they mean

*Outstanding: this aspect of the provision is of exceptionally high quality*

*Good: this aspect of the provision is strong*

*Satisfactory: this aspect of the provision is sound*

*Inadequate: this aspect of the provision is not good enough*

For more information about early years inspections, please see the booklet *Are you ready for your inspection?* which is available from Ofsted's website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk).

## THE QUALITY AND STANDARDS OF THE CARE AND NURSERY EDUCATION

On the basis of the evidence collected on this inspection:

The quality and standards of the care are good. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are good.

### WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Apple Blossoms Nursery registered in 2006. It operates from three rooms within a large Victorian house. There are two main playrooms in the basement and one room on the ground floor. This is used for sleeping and quiet activities. The nursery is situated in a residential area of Stoke Newington within the London borough of Hackney. A maximum of 14 children may attend the nursery at any one time. The nursery is open each weekday from 08.30 to 17.30 for 50 weeks of the year. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 16 children aged from one to under four years on roll. Of these, four children receive funding for early education. Children who attend come from the local community. The nursery currently supports children who speak English as an additional language.

The nursery employs four members of staff. All staff hold appropriate early years qualifications.

## **THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION**

### **Helping children to be healthy**

The provision is good.

The high standard of cleanliness throughout the nursery helps keep children healthy. Effective health and hygiene procedures are in place. The risk of cross-infection is minimised due to the care taken, such as the use of disposable gloves when changing nappies and the use of wipes and paper towels for hand drying. Children's minor medical emergencies are dealt with appropriately as the staff use their current first aid knowledge to ensure children are looked after well. All staff hold a current first aid certificate. Their training is up-dated as required.

Children benefit from a healthy balanced nutritious diet. Children enjoy a choice of apples, bananas, pears and oranges for their snack mid-morning. Their individual dietary requirements are met effectively as staff are aware of children who have allergies to certain foods; this is clearly documented on their records and in the kitchen. Meal times are happy sociable occasions; staff sit and eat with the children. For lunch, children enjoy curry and rice with a selection of vegetables. Salad is always available as a side dish; this helps children make healthy choices. Although drinks are available on request and children are offered a choice of drinks throughout the day. Children are unable to access fresh drinking water for themselves in the main playroom. This limits their development of self-care and independence.

Children have daily opportunities for physical activities. They enjoy playing with a range of outdoor equipment and experience fresh air when they access the secure enclosed outdoor area. Staff set children appropriate challenges to help them develop their physical skills. Children balance along bricks, skilfully manoeuvre bikes around obstacles and develop their co-ordination as they catch and throw balls. Children are developing their fine hand-eye co-ordination. They skilfully pick up uncooked rice with small scoops using a spoon. Older children handle pencils, brushes and dough cutters with good control.

### **Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe**

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a bright and welcoming environment. Children's work, pictures and photos are attractively presented throughout the nursery. This creates a child-centred environment and shows that staff value children's efforts.

A good selection of appropriate furniture enables children to be comfortable during their play. Comfortable areas with cushions in the main playroom ensure children have sufficient opportunity, to rest and relax during periods of the day. There are individual beds and a quiet room available for children to sleep. Children have access to a wide range of clean, safe and good quality play equipment; this supports their overall development well. Resources are invitingly displayed; children self-select these from low level storage. Consequently children have good opportunities to make choices and learn to be independent.

Children's safety is a high priority within the nursery. Staff are vigilant and undertake daily risk assessments in the nursery to reduce any potential hazards. Staff complete a safety check list

when they take children out; this is to ensure all risks are identified and children remain safe. There is a good balance of freedom and safety in the nursery. Staff remind children sensitively about keeping themselves safe. They tell children not to run around in the playroom as someone could get hurt.

Suitable child protection procedures are in place to protect children and ensure concerns about their welfare are dealt with appropriately. The staff have a clear understanding of their responsibilities, they know what to do if they suspect abuse.

### **Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do**

The provision is good.

Children settle well and enjoy their time at the nursery. The nursery offers intimate care for children in a warm, homely environment. Gradual settling in periods which are planned individually between parents and staff, ensure children are happy and secure before being left. Children quietly but confidently enter the nursery; they immediately select activities of their choice and become happily involved in play.

Staff interact with children in a warm, friendly manner. They offer good support to children; this helps them to become confident and independent. Children are building positive relationships with staff and each other. Older children confidently approach staff members and chat happily about what they are doing. Younger children are gaining self-assurance as they try new activities. They copy older children shouting 'one, two, three, jump' as they step from one brick to another in the garden.

Staff work well as a team to ensure they have good knowledge of children's needs. An effective key worker system is in operation which contributes to staffs knowledge and understanding of children's individual needs. They have good knowledge of the Foundation Stage and apply this well to help children thrive in all areas of learning. The Birth to three matters framework is used effectively for the younger children; this contributes well to children's overall emotional well-being and development.

### **Nursery Education.**

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Children participate in a wide range of fun and interesting activities which helps them achieve well in all areas of learning. Staff have good knowledge and understanding of the Foundation Stage. As a team they are all involved in planning, this ensures that all children make good progress towards the early learning goals. Staff continue to evaluate their working practice. They ensure plans and activities are adapted effectively to meet the individual needs of children. They recognise that previous assessments and observations were not being used effectively to help plan to move children onto the next stage of learning. Plans are in the process of being changed and devised in line with the new Foundation Stage which links into the Birth to three matters framework.

Children are enthusiastic learners and are keen to participate in all the activities available. Staff are skilled at engaging children in new experiences, such as exploring the texture of uncooked rice. Children are encouraged to be focused; their learning is extended through good open-ended

questioning and support from staff. For example, 'what does it feel like?' 'What is it used for?' 'Is it big or small?'

Children's confidence and self-esteem is built up by staff who know the children well. Resources are invitingly displayed and easily accessible encouraging children to access them freely and initiate their own play. There is a good balance of child-free and adult-directed play. Children are learning to recognise their needs and independently care for themselves. Older children have good self-care skills; they dress independently in outdoor clothing and skilfully do up their coat buttons. They change from their outdoor shoes to their slippers when they come inside. Children behave well. They are encouraged to be kind and considerate to each other. They are taught to share and do this well as they take turns to sit on the front of the tandem bike.

Children understand that print carries meaning through playing with words. When they arrive at the nursery, they select their name cards from the table and stick them on the door. Older children can recognise their own name and that of other children. They are beginning to write their names with well-formed letters. Pre-writing skills in activities such as role play, are not fully extended to include opportunities to write for a variety of purposes. Children enjoy books, they have good opportunities to self-select books and enjoy listening to stories individually and in a group. Older children have fun as they use their imagination and tell stories to adults.

Children benefit from good individual support to help them develop mathematical concepts. They gain confidence as they compare volume and size and as they count how many cupfuls of rice will fit in an adult's hand and then a child's hand. They talk about who has the biggest hand. They learn about positions as they throw the ball up and down. Older children count beyond ten, they confidently count how many compartments are in the long train.

Children enjoy exploring nature when they take walks to the local park and participate in activities such as growing plants. They take turns in caring for the nursery's pet hamster which includes some children visiting the vet. Children learn about the wider world as they visit a local Jewish school. They celebrate various festivals such as Christmas and Diwali. This helps children to develop positive attitudes and to respect differences. Children's skills in building and constructing is developing well. Older children skilfully design and make a complex construction using a brio train set.

Children participate enthusiastically in taking part in creative and messy play, they use the painting easel freely. They explore colours and use their imagination well as they make pictures using a selection of paints. They enjoy taking part in expressing themselves through music. Children sing songs and recite them well from memory. They happily sing, 'Bee, Bee, Bumble Bee' at circle time.

### **Helping children make a positive contribution**

The provision is good.

The nursery provides an inclusive environment whereby all children are valued and respected as individuals. Staff work closely with parents to ensure they know the individual needs of children well. Children quietly display high levels of confidence and are developing a high sense

of self-esteem. All children whatever their age or ability are encouraged to participate in all the activities provided. There are good systems in place to support children with additional needs. Staff use Makaton when they need to, this helps support children with learning or hearing difficulties.

Children's social, moral, spiritual and cultural development is appropriately fostered. Children show wonder and exclaim with delight 'Wow that's amazing', when the ball bounces three times after hitting a wall. Toys, books and posters positively reflect various cultures, lifestyles and abilities, helping children to value differences. Children learn to appreciate and value each others culture by discussing similarities and differences. For example, children know some staff fast when it is Ramadan and discuss this openly at meal times.

The ethos of the nursery regarding management of behaviour is to care and share. Children are strongly encouraged to share resources and to care for one another. Children behave well. They take turns and listen to each other when talking at circle time. Older children show care and consideration to younger children; they patiently wait their turn to wheel the bikes in the garden. Staff are good role models, they talk to children warmly and with respect. They distract younger children and always explain at their level of understanding the boundaries within the setting.

The partnership of parents of children who receive nursery education is good. Parents are actively encouraged to be involved in their children's learning. Children benefit from very good systems that are in place to ensure parents receive good information about their child's progress. Children's files with their individual work and progress sheets are accessible at any time for parents to view. Regular meetings are held to ensure parents are aware of their child's progress. Information for parents of how they can be actively involved in their children's learning within the nursery is good. Parents regularly help out and support children's learning where they can. Parents are provided with good information about the nursery before their placement begins; this includes the nursery's policies and procedures. Parents are invited to attend regular open days. The nursery also operates an open door policy; whereby parents are welcome at any time.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is good.

Children develop a secure sense of belonging because the staff are caring and know the children well. Children benefit from being cared for in a well-organised nursery. The resources are easily accessible and children can move freely between the two main play rooms. A real strength of this setting is that staff provide a cosy, warm, friendly atmosphere whereby children receive lots of individual attention. This helps children to develop well in all areas.

There are effective recruitment procedures in place and the induction programme is good. Staff are encouraged to attend further relevant childcare training. This means that suitable, experienced and qualified persons look after children. Staff are very clear about their roles and responsibilities, they have delegated duties which are rotated daily. There are daily briefing and de-briefing sessions to enable staff to consistently evaluate the quality of care and education given to children.

All the required documentation for the safe and effective management of the nursery is in place. This contributes to the welfare of the children. The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Leadership and management of nursery education is good. Staff are knowledgeable about the Foundation Stage and consistently review their working practice. They have developed good systems to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of their planning. They recognise that their previous observations and assessments of children were not being used effectively. Consequently new systems are currently being developed. This is to ensure that the nursery education they provide continues to be effective.

### **Improvements since the last inspection**

Not applicable.

### **Complaints since the last inspection**

Since registration there have been no complaints made to Ofsted that required the provider or Ofsted to take any action in order to meet the National Standards.

The provider is required to keep a record of complaints made by parents, which they can see on request. The complaints record may contain complaints other than those made to Ofsted.

## **THE QUALITY AND STANDARDS OF THE CARE AND NURSERY EDUCATION**

On the basis of the evidence collected on this inspection:

The quality and standards of the care are good. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are good.

### **WHAT MUST BE DONE TO SECURE FUTURE IMPROVEMENT?**

#### **The quality and standards of the care**

To improve the quality and standards of care further the registered person should take account of the following recommendation(s):

- make sure fresh drinking water is available to children at all times

#### **The quality and standards of the nursery education**

To improve the quality and standards of nursery education further the registered person should take account of the following recommendation(s):

- continue improving systems to monitor and evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of curriculum planning and the use of children's assessments

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the leaflet *Complaints about Ofsted Early Years: concerns or complaints about Ofsted's role in regulating and inspecting childcare and early education* (HMI ref no 2599) which is available from Ofsted's website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)